



Success Story

IQ PL Hosts Over 100,000 Mailboxes on NetApp and Achieves 85% Service Subscription Renewals



Another NetApp solution delivered by:



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Industry

Cloud and web hosting services

The Challenge

Build a highly reliable and versatile platform for mail hosting data.

The Solution

Deploy NetApp® FAS storage with native NFS support to accompany a cluster of Linux servers and leverage NetApp Snapshot® technology.

Benefits

- Reduced storage capacity for hosted mail data by 20%
- Can serve 15,000 customers of all sizes on a daily basis
- Experiences long-term customer satisfaction
- Achieved an annual subscription renewal rate of 85%
- Set up new services such as e-mail archiving
- Gained a stable and reliable mail hosting environment
- Can broaden its scope of services and optimize data management
- Gained an excellent reputation for service quality

Customer Profile

IQ PL (www.iq.pl) delivers advanced IT solutions to business customers. The company's offering comprises infrastructure as a service for colocation, dedicated servers, and private cloud as well as platform as a service with shared hosting, VPS OpenVZ, and VPS Windows. The experienced provider employs highly qualified and certified staff and meets Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards. It is the first Polish company to provide server space on a commercial basis. The company was founded in 2001 and has its headquarters in Gdansk on the Baltic Sea. Its tier 3 data center is the first and only infrastructure of this type that is widely available to customers in Pomerania.

The Challenge

Build and develop web hosting services

IQ PL is widely acknowledged for its web hosting qualities, which go way beyond what customers usually expect. Instead of dedicated web servers for e-mail data, IQ PL decided in 2010 to deploy a Linux-based server cluster and couple it with a shared file storage platform. "We wanted to offer our e-mail customers a unique

service quality. And we knew that mail hosting would become a major business segment for us," says Krzysztof Lendzion, CEO of IQ PL. "Now the challenge was to find a solution that would help to attract and satisfy customers while providing us with efficient and flexible operations."

The Solution

Deploy NetApp FAS storage with native NFS and backup

IQ PL chose a NetApp solution and makes the most of NetApp Snapshot technology. NetApp delivers fast and space-efficient backups for any environment, fits many data protection levels, and is the basis for reliable rescues—whether a file restore or a full environment recovery.

"NetApp data protection was definitely a sweet spot and helped us to set up and maintain a unique service offering," says Lendzion. He adds, "We are still the one and only provider in Poland who supplies data protection for mailboxes as part of its basic service. Customers can restore mail data themselves and have direct access to their backup copies over a fortnight."

A perfect win-win situation

Customers can help themselves quickly whenever needed and IQ PL saves IT helpdesk resources, which the company can spend on more demanding support cases than file restores. Thanks to native NFS support, NetApp storage and Linux servers work together seamlessly and cater to smooth operations. The NetApp AutoSupport® system monitors system health remotely, detects disk failures, and initiates spare part delivery to IQ PL at once. To manage the storage, IQ PL engineers rely on NetApp OnCommand® tools.

“The graphical overview shows at a glance where we’re at and makes it easy to keep the appropriate service levels,” says Michał Grzędzicki, platform architect at IQ PL. The NetApp features of virtual storage allocation and data reduction help the provider to save storage capacity. “Up to 20% savings is very good for a web hosting environment with typically very diverse data,” he adds.

Business Benefits

85% annual subscription renewal rate

Customer satisfaction is the one and only measure of success at IQ PL. “More than 15,000 business customers from Pomerania and across Poland trust IQ PL for their mail data. Cinema City Poland, 3D printing manufacturer Zortrax, church institutions, car dealers, stock market agencies, and many more know that our services just work,” says Lenzion. He adds, “This is very good. But what is even better is that every year about 85% of our customers prolong their service subscriptions with IQ PL. This is fantastic proof of our service quality, which relies heavily on our NetApp platform.”

Add new services and increase service levels simply

When IQ PL’s mail hosting business evolved, more customers, data, and mailboxes were added and the storage just kept running. Today, IQ PL handles more than 100,000 customer mailboxes on NetApp shared storage. “NetApp exceeded our expectations. Though it was a big investment for a company of our size, it was worth every zloty,” says Lenzion. “But now, after five years of 24/7 duty, it’s time to bring the environment to the next level.”

The provider has already ramped up its standards with a data center that meets tier 3 security. It will be easy to enhance the production site with disaster recovery capabilities within a NetApp data infrastructure. IQ PL plans to implement a NetApp FAS2552 system at the primary site and run NetApp clustered Data ONTAP® and NetApp replication technology. The current system will move to a secondary site and serve as the replication target. Another option is NetApp Data ONTAP Edge, which applies NetApp software intelligence to third-party low-cost storage.

IQ PL is currently looking into e-mail archiving as a service to offload customers’ mailboxes from older mail and attachments. Moving this data to slower and cheaper media enables reasonable pricing, saves costs, and optimizes mail data management. Additional mail service packages with larger backup horizons are another option to evolve the business further.

“It’s a huge benefit that NetApp offers so many options to run and develop both service platform and services,” says Lenzion. “This adds to our good experiences, from smooth system operations to great support. It was sort of natural for us to again choose NetApp for our new service platform. We didn’t even check the products of other vendors.”

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NetApp Products

NetApp FAS2000HA series

NetApp Data ONTAP 8

AutoSupport

OnCommand software

NetApp SnapRestore® technology

Snapshot technology

Storage efficiency tools

Protocol

NFS

Third-Party Products

POP3/IMAP e-mail servers

Red Hat Linux

Partner

Arrow ECS Sp. z o.o.

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